



Press Release

May 13, 2025

## A Day to Celebrate!

Asbestos victims' groups from around the world have come together to welcome a new book: *In a Rain of Dust – Death, Deceit and the Lawyer Who Busted Big Asbestos* which was published in London today.

The text written by David Kinley joins the pantheon of other English-language classics which stripped away carefully crafted corporate façades to show the ugly reality which lies behind asbestos industry profits. The gripping story of how a London-based human rights solicitor with little prior knowledge about asbestos called to account one of the UK's biggest asbestos conglomerates is not only a riveting read but also a timely reminder of the consequences of an industrial legacy that continues to cause death and destruction on a global scale.

Research by Richard Meeran began on this legal action in 1995; by the time the final resolution of this case was achieved in 2004, thousands of clients had become part of this multijurisdictional class action. The book reads like a best seller as it unravels the twists and turns of the historic legal battle which was *Afrika et al. v. Cape Plc.*

Commenting on the importance of this case, Engineer Fernanda Giannasi, Co-founder of the Brazilian Association of the Asbestos-Exposed (ABREA) said:

“In Brazil, as in South Africa, European asbestos companies pioneered the mining of asbestos. They did everything in their power to avoid responsibility for the damage their operations caused to workers, local communities and the environment. The victory achieved in the case brought against a UK company in a UK court on behalf of injured South Africans was a watershed moment as it revealed that huge multinationals could be held to account for crimes committed in foreign countries.”

Thirty years after work began on the case against Cape, Indonesian ban asbestos activist Muchamad Darisman commented:

“The fight to achieve asbestos justice for the injured in Indonesia is brutal and combative. We are hampered at every turn by vested interests who are ruthless in their defense of corporate profits. Despite this, substantial progress is being made as shown by a recent Supreme Court decision accepting the need for asbestos products to be labelled. The story of the case against Cape and the ingenuity, solidarity and professionalism which eventually overcame all the odds to deliver justice stands as an inspiration to all of us in Indonesia fighting for asbestos justice.”

Echoing the comments of his colleagues, veteran campaigner John Flanagan from the Merseyside Asbestos Victims Support Group said:

“I remember first hearing about the Cape case at the Global Asbestos Congress in Osasco, Brazil in 2000. Richard Meeran's presentation there set off alarm bells as I reflected on the fact that asbestos fiber produced in Cape's South African mines was almost certainly sent to the UK via the Liverpool docks. Many of our members had contracted asbestos cancers as a

result of working at the docks and it was chilling to think of the connection between the workers at Cape's mines and the dockyard workers in Liverpool. From that time on, I followed the progress of the case with great interest. This new book has a relevance not just to those of us fighting for the rights of the asbestos-injured but to everyone concerned about human rights, environmental justice and corporate responsibility. The recording of this David & Goliath struggle was well worth telling and David Kinley did a masterful job in telling it."

### **Notes for Editors**

1. For additional details, please email: Laurie Kazan-Allen (IBAS) at [lkaz@btconnect.com](mailto:lkaz@btconnect.com)
2. Information about the groups which issued this press release can be accessed at:
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  - International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS)  
Website: <http://ibasecretariat.org>
  - Associação Brasileira dos Expostos ao Amianto (ABREA)  
[Brazilian Association of the Asbestos Exposed]  
Website: <http://www.abrea.org.br>
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